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## Calendar

March 14-16, 2007 MPLA Annual Conference
March 23, 2007 College of Dupage Tele- conference
April 11, 2007 MSL Commission Meeting
April 15—21, 2007 National Library Week
April 25—28, 2007 MLA Annual Conference
For more details: <a href="http://calendar.mtlb.org/">http://calendar.mtlb.org/</a>

## Library Trivia

(Answers on page 8)

- Are there more McDonald's or public libraries in the United States?
- What percentage of the population has access to the Internet at home or office?
- Do Americans spend more money on school library materials or on video games?

## Montana Libraries Help Create an Information Literate Society

*A Message from Darlene Staffeldt, Montana State Librarian*

If you are reading this, you are obviously literate.

There's a very good chance you know how to use a computer and, I'd be willing to bet, know the meaning of the words "information overload."

Most of us today are keenly aware of the avalanche of information coming at us from the time we wake up with our favorite morning talk show until we turn off the late-night news. Books, newspapers, professional journals, email from co-workers, and newsletters from community organizations add to the volume of information flooding our lives.

But more information doesn't necessarily mean better. If you read the headlines, you know that opportunities for inaccuracies, exploitation and deception have grown along with the speed and magnitude of information available to us. Coping with a bewildering amount of information requires a new form of literacy, one that goes beyond the ability to read – something educators refer to as information literacy.

This expanded definition of literacy means more than being able to read or use a computer. It means knowing how to find, evaluate and use the best information from an ever-increasing array of sources.

Noted business leaders and organizational theorists tell us that lifelong learning and the ability to apply new knowledge in a changing world is the first, most important thing for career and life success. But information literacy is more than just theory. It is a critical skill in today's information jungle.

Good decisions depend on good information. Information literate people know how to find quality information that will help them through family, medical, or job crises. They

know how to separate the wheat from the chaff, the true from the untrue, the fact from the rumor.

As a nation, we have focused our energies on maximizing the availability of new technology. The time has come to expand that vision. Librarians know that having an internet connection is not enough. We must be information smart and Montana's librarians are working to build information literate communities, where people of all ages have both the resources and skills they need to prosper.

This issue of *Big Sky Libraries* helps to demonstrate some of the unique ways that Montana's libraries and librarians are working to help our citizens find and sort through the information they need. From some of the unique resources we

offer at the Montana State Library to new programs that deliver information right to a library patron's mailbox, you'll discover new ways that Montana's libraries are working to create an information literate citizenry.

From our diverse communities and our diverse collections, there are many ways that Montana libraries work hard to best serve our diverse patrons and to put in their hands the information they want and need. As technologies change and advance, libraries continue to play a unique and central role in information gathering. They are a place for education and self-help. They offer opportunity to all. Being information smart means knowing when you need help and where to get it. The place to start, as we all know, is your Montana library.



**Darlene Staffeldt**  
State Librarian



**Good decisions depend on good information.**

# The School Library Media Center

*A Message from Linda McCulloch, Montana State Library Commissioner and Superintendent of the Office of Public Instruction*

People may remember it simply as the school library, the place they went between classes to read, do homework or conduct research for a paper. As a school librarian, the school library is my classroom, a place to show kids the wonderful worlds they can explore by reading. However, the school library of yesterday has given way to a new and even more exciting place--the school library media center--where information is available in a wide variety of formats, both print and electronic. In this new age of libraries, materials and activities are coordinated with classroom assignments and students learn information skills to prepare them to live and

work in the 21st century.

Today's school library media program plays an integral role in educating children for the future. It is where students learn to find, analyze, evaluate, interpret, and communicate information and ideas. These are skills they will need throughout their lives in our information-based society. In addition to serving as independent learning centers, the programs of many school library media centers are directly integrated into the curriculum.

Learning today means more than memorizing facts. It means learning for a lifetime. Educators know

the school library media center is the key to teaching students not just to read but to practice the skills they need to seek and use information throughout their lives. In fact, research repeatedly shows those students from schools with professionally staffed, fully-equipped libraries score higher on achievement tests, espe-



Linda McCulloch

***Learning today means more than memorizing facts. It means learning for a lifetime.***

cially in the areas of reading comprehension and basic research skills.

For many children, the school library media specialist is their first experience with a librarian. These information professionals play a critical role in the education of children. National guidelines recommend that every school building have at least one full-time licensed library media professional with appropriate support staff.

The ratio of students to school library media specialists varies widely. We should commend ourselves in Montana because we are the state with the best ratio. We boast one school library media specialist for every 184.5 public school students, but we can always look for ways to do better.

We all want Montana's children to succeed both as students and adults. One way to ensure their success is to provide access to well-equipped school li-

brary media centers and professional school library media specialists. This is an investment not only in each and every child in Montana, but also in the future of our state.

I have asked the Montana Legislature to provide the Office of Public Instruction with the funding to reinstate our Library Media Specialist position we lost through Legislative cuts to OPI in the mid 1990's. With this position, the OPI can provide additional support to schools so they may continue to improve the quality of school library media centers in our state. As we move through the Legislative process, I will continue to push for funding for this position.

Thank you for your support of our schools, library media centers, and 145,416 students. As a school librarian, I appreciate your efforts to advocate the importance of school library media centers in Montana.

## Montana Public School Enrollment

	2004-2005	2005-2006	%Change 2005-2006
<b>Elementary</b>			
Prekindergarten	757	793	
Kindergarten	10,205	10,299	
Grades 1-6	63,414	63,175	
Grades 7-8	23,971	23,277	
Ungraded	110	68	
<b>Total Elementary</b>	<b>98,457</b>	<b>97,612</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>
<b>High School</b>			
Grades 9-12	47,786	47,438	
Ungraded	309	209	
<b>Total High School</b>	<b>48,095</b>	<b>47,647</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>
<b>State-Funded Schools*</b>			
Elementary Pre K-8	35	31	
High School 9-12	118	126	
<b>Total State-Funded Schools</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>2.6%</b>
<b>Total Public School Enrollment</b>	<b>146,705</b>	<b>145,416</b>	<b>-0.9%</b>

\*The state-funded schools are Pine Hills School, Riverside School, and the Montana School for the Deaf and Blind.

## Montana Libraries Make History with New Pilot Program

On those ice-cold winter nights, it's no fun for your patrons to get out of the house and head to the library to find a good book to curl up with or a movie to watch.

And now some Montana library patrons don't have to!

Montana residents who are patrons of the libraries volunteered to be part of a new pilot program called WorldCat Direct can have library materials sent directly to their homes or offices.

WorldCat Direct allows anyone with a Montana library card to request library materials and have them delivered directly to their home or office—at no cost to the user during the program pilot period. Library materials can then be returned to the library via postage-paid return envelope and labels.

Twelve libraries in Montana are the first in the world to pilot this new program. These libraries include: Glen-



dive Public Library; Whitehall Community Library; Miles City Public Library; Miles Community College Library; Dillon Public Library; Drummond School Library; Missoula Public Library; Liberty County Library; Hearst Free Library; Havre Hill County Library; Polson City Library; and Bitterroot Public Library.

The WorldCat Direct pilot program provides Montana library users with one more way to access the world with faster, easier, and more convenient access to materials in participating libraries throughout the state. The program is funded through participating libraries, the Montana State Library,

and OCLC Online Computer Library Center, a nonprofit computer library service and research organization in Dublin, Ohio.

For more information on the program, contact any of the participating libraries or the State Library's Sarah McHugh at (800) 338-5087.

## Montana State Library Is Part of a Revolution!

By James Kammerer  
Library Information Services  
Supervisor

Web pages grow exponentially in number by the billion and the Montana State Library adds hyperlinks to an already crowded cyber universe.

Yawn. So what? Is this really newsworthy?

Yes, because our links represent a revolution in the way users access state government information from the library. Montana is one of a handful of state libraries nationwide providing full text access to state publications via digital archive links.

Today, users searching their online

library catalog retrieve a bibliographic record showing the location of print copies of state publications plus digital archive links for immediate access to the actual publication. The Montana State Library digital archive links eliminate the need for

***Digital archives free up precious shelf space for other library resources!***

users to visit the library during certain hours. The digital archive means no more interlibrary loans, overdue books, and missing or damaged publications.

Montana state agencies also benefit because digital archive links lessen the number of costly print copies of



their publications that they need to produce and submit by law to the State Library. And, their fewer copies of state publications get wider distribution.

Depository libraries also welcome the advent of digital archive links because electronic versions of state publications free up precious shelf space for other library resources and eliminate time consuming processes associated with bringing print publications into their library collections.

***Did you know? The <http://mlncat.org> interface is available in eight different languages: English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Japanese, Korean, Chinese (Traditional) and Chinese (Simplified).***



## Montana Libraries Find New Ways to Get Their Patrons What They Want

It seems that as patrons have access to more information, they want more than what their own libraries can contain on their shelves. With the cost of interlibrary loans increasing and with the goal of providing what their patrons want and need more quickly, two groups of Montana libraries share everything in their libraries from books to DVDs to patrons.

"These Montana libraries are using everything from the latest technology to busses to better serve their patrons," said Darlene Staffeldt, Montana State Librarian. "Their partnership sets a new gold standard in helping Montanans find and get exactly what they want or need, whether its research on a terminal disease or a new bestseller to read over the weekend."

Eight Montana Shared Catalog libraries comprise the MSC Partners. They are: Missoula Public Library, Flathead County Library, Bitterroot Public Library in Hamilton, Hearst Free Library in Anaconda, Drum-



mond School and Community Library, Polson City Library, Miles City Public Library and the Miles Community College Library. Together, the Partner Libraries share a collection of over 723,000 items, which includes books, movies, audiotapes, magazines, and journals.

A second MSC sharing group is known as the MSC 4-Rivers Partners. This group includes the Madison Valley Public Library in Ennis, the Thompson-Hickman County Library in Virginia City, Twin Bridges Public Library, Sheridan Public Library, Three Forks Community Library, and Whitehall Community Library. This new group will benefit all the users at each of these libraries and give them access to nearly 121,000 items.

"Providing immediate direct access to over 840,000 items is unprecedented in Montana," said Sarah McHugh, Director of the Montana Shared Catalog, which provides the Partner Libraries and the 4-Rivers Group with the technology to access one another's collections easily. "What these user sharing libraries are doing is opening up the world to their patrons."

These libraries have made accessing the 840,000 items easy for patrons as well. Their patrons use the Montana Shared Catalog, with its easy-to-use interface, to search all of the collections. If a patron finds something owned by another library, the patron simply requests it through the Catalog. The libraries check these reservations on a daily basis, retrieve the requested item from their shelves and put it in a box, which is then either bussed or delivered via a local business to the



**MSC Partner Collection: 723,000 items!!!**  
**MSC 4-Rivers Partners: 121,000 items!!!**

library that has requested the item. Patrons generally receive their requested item within a day or two.

In addition, twelve Montana libraries are currently participating in a pilot project with OCLC, to test the concept of delivery to the user's home. OCLC is dedicating \$100,000 and shipping supplies to the home delivery part of the pilot, with the goal of evaluating the popularity of this option. A second piece of the pilot allows for a more seamless, faster interlibrary loan process between libraries inside and outside of user sharing groups. The libraries participating in this pilot include ten MSC libraries and two libraries from the HiLine consortium. For more information on the pilot project, read *Montana Libraries Make History with New Program* on page 3.

"Patrons used to be happy with what they could get from their own library's shelves," said McHugh. "Computers and the Internet have changed all of that. Today, people know of all types of resources that are available and these hugely successful resource sharing programs demonstrate that libraries can still be *the place* to access the information people want or need."

## MSL Staff Helps Libraries Negotiate E-rate!

By Suzanne Reymer  
State Technology Librarian

It sounds great – discounts for libraries to provide affordable telecommunications and Internet access for their patrons. But as anyone who has completed an E-rate application knows, the E-rate road can be bumpy and difficult to traverse alone.



That's why since E-Rate took effect in 1998, the Montana State Library has been providing all kinds of assistance to public library applicants looking for those E-rate discounts.

How do we help? Where do I begin?

- We introduce people to the timeline, procedures, and forms.
- We approve technology plans, proofread applications (upon request), and look for and notify applicants of potential problem areas.

- In addition, we try to keep the Montana library community aware of program changes and deadlines.
- We participate in email lists and conference calls with other state libraries and SLD (School Libraries Division) in order to have access to additional resources.
- We can act as a liaison between E-Rate applicants and SLD.
- We ask to be notified of contacts and problems with SLD personnel.
- We also offer advice on how to handle site visits, reviews, and appeals.

Applying for an E-rate discount doesn't have to be a confusing, frustrating, and lonely experience. Just call the Montana State Library and we're ready to do all that we can to make the often bumpy E-Rate road as smooth as possible!



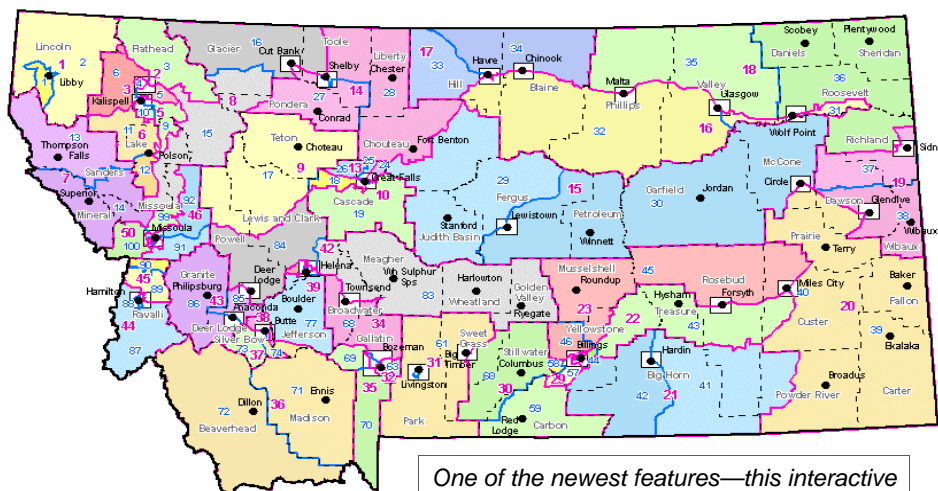
## Montana's Geographic Information Clearinghouse

By Sibyl Govan  
NRIS Projects Manager

Did you know that government agencies use tax dollars to develop geographic information? Many state and federal agencies purchase aerial photos and satellite images to keep up with what's happening on the ground. They also send personnel into the field to collect information about natural and manmade features on the landscape. Universities produce geographic data as they conduct research in many different fields. Counties and cities maintain information about schools, zoning regulations, subdivisions, and land parcels.

So how do you, as a librarian, help the average citizen find all this geographic information? You might be surprised to learn that it's all at the library!

Much of the geographic information for Montana finds its way to the Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) at the Montana State Library. Through NRIS, this information is



*One of the newest features—this interactive map that identifies your 2007 Legislators!*

managed for permanent public access and made available via the Internet.

At MSL, information specialists take care of geographic information by storing it in a geographic information system (GIS). They assist government personnel and other patrons in retrieving the data so that it can be used for analysis or displayed on maps.

So the next time you have a patron who needs a map, guide them to the NRIS Web page (<http://nris.mt.gov>).

At this site, your patrons can print out maps from the Montana Maps collection. Or, if they prefer to interact with a map, they can pan and zoom over Montana, viewing high-resolution aerial photographs and other geographic data by using the Topofinder or the Digital Atlas. If your patrons are interested in satellite imagery, they should definitely check out our newest collection, MontanaView.

([www.montanaview.org](http://www.montanaview.org))





## Award-winning author of *Sandman*, *American Gods*, and *Anansi Boys* Neil Gaiman to speak at MLA!



By Patricia  
Spencer

During the course of twenty years as a writer, Neil Gaiman has been one of the top writers in modern comics. He is also a movie and television screenwriter, a journalist, and a best-selling novelist. Described as "the best-selling author you never heard of" by *Forbes* magazine, Gaiman's latest book, *Fragile Things*, contains stories set in the world of "The

Matrix," and others set in the worlds of gothic fiction and children's fiction. This extraordinary collection showcases Gaiman's storytelling brilliance as well as his terrifyingly entertaining dark sense of humor.

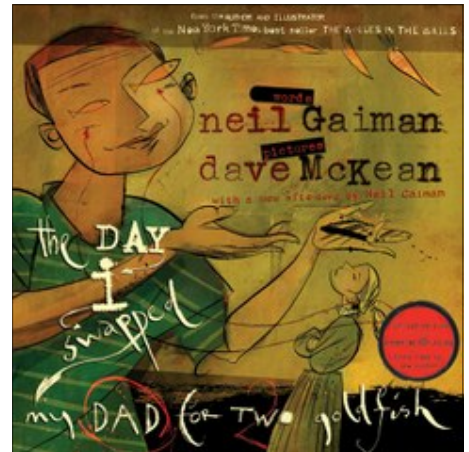
He was the creator and writer of the monthly cult DC Comics horror-weird series, *Sandman*, which won twelve Eisner Comic Industry Awards and a World Fantasy Award for best short story, making it the first comic ever to receive a literary award. He has a huge Web presence, and his personal Web site was singled out by CNN for reinventing the marketing of a novel. ([www.neilgaiman.com](http://www.neilgaiman.com))

*American Gods*, his internationally best-selling novel, which won the 2002 Bram Stoker Award, Hugo Award, and the Nebula Award for best novel, is a dark and kaleidoscopic journey deep into myth and across an Amer-

ica that is at once eerily familiar and utterly alien.

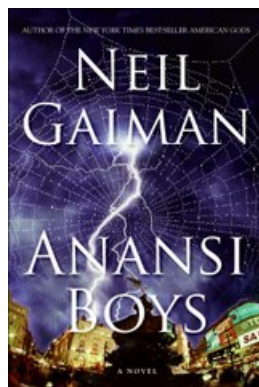
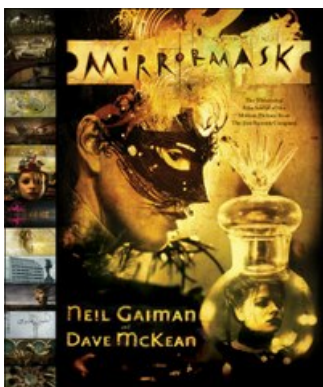
Gaiman's work probes the worlds of myth, imagination, and creativity. With a deep understanding of the critical importance of storytelling and myth, he explores the metaphors by which we live our lives. At a time when creativity is one of the most valuable assets to any business, Gaiman's mastery of myth and legend and their role in the contemporary world make his work as a writer and speaker unique. At the podium, Gaiman shares the stories that have shaped the past, giving audiences the critical wisdom and inspiration to strive in both business and life.

Gaiman serves on the Board of the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund, an organization that works to protect the First Amendment rights of comic book creators, publishers, and retailers. Between 1993 and 2000, Gaiman did a series of occasional readings in theaters across America. This tour, known as the "Guardian Angel Tour," raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Comic Book Legal Defense Fund and gained Gaiman a reputation as a performer and public speaker.



Gaiman will present "Intellectual Freedom and Comics," on Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. Immediately following that program, Gaiman will serve as the distinguished

author at the author luncheon. A public program will be offered following the luncheon. Conference attendees can register for the morning program as well as the luncheon, but MLA will sell tickets for the afternoon program to the general public as well as MLA participants. Tickets will be \$20.00 for the public program and will be available through the MLA web site. Stay tuned to [www.mtlib.org](http://www.mtlib.org) and wired for more information!



# One Lusty Librarian to Speak at MLA!



By Patricia Spencer

The *Los Angeles Times* calls her "One Lusty Librarian."

The *New York Times* calls her "the talk of librarian circles."

Her Web page states, "Readers can't get enough of her recommendations while bookstores and libraries offer standing room only whenever she visits. Since the release of the best-selling *Book Lust* in 2003 and the Librarian Action Figure modeled in her likeness, Nancy Pearl has become a rock star among readers and the tastemaker people turn to when deciding what to read next."

Nancy Pearl will be one of our honored guests at this year's MLA conference. She will present the Keynote address on Thursday, April 26 at 10:30 AM. Pearl will discuss

the role of libraries and librarians in her life, how *Book Lust* and its companions came to be written, and some of the perils she has discovered in a life devoted to books and reading.

Following the Keynote address, Pearl will present a Reader's Advisory Workshop entitled, "Yes Ma'am – Mood, Appeal, and Motivation in Providing Excellent Reader's Advisory Service." In order to effectively match up a reader with just the right book, a librarian needs to understand how to apply appeal characteristics, as well as how to work with the mood and motivation of the reader. In this session, Pearl will focus on defining, refining, and using appeal characteristics, the role of mood and motivation in selecting a good book to read, and tips and tricks to use in readers' advisory work at the reference desk

In anticipation of Nancy Pearl's appearance at MLA, Suzanne Reymer, State-wide Technology Librarian with the Montana State Library, came up with a fabulous idea to tour the Nancy Pearl Action Figurine around Montana and use the pictures to create a slideshow for the Cates Fundraiser.

"While we may not be able to bring Nancy Pearl to each of our communities, we can introduce her to some of the wonders of our state via our Nancy Pearl Librarian Action Figures," said Reymer.

To participate, simply take photos of your action figure at your library, in your community, attending book-related events, etc. and post them on Flickr at: MLA Cates Nancy Pearl. <http://www.flickr.com/groups/52279058@N00/>

For more information on Pearl's appearance this year's MLA conference, log onto [www.mtlib.org](http://www.mtlib.org) and check out the conference program.



## Some Recommendations from Nancy Pearl

### First Novels

*The Intuitionist*

by Colson Whitehead

*The Eyre Affair*

by Jasper Fforde

### First Lines to Remember

"You'll want to scratch," said the nurse. "Don't," said the orderly. from *No One Thinks of Greenland* by John Griesemer.

"First I had to get his body into the boat,"

from *After Life* by Rhian Ellis

### Pawns of History

*The Persian Bride*

by John Buchan

*Hummingbird House*

by Patricia Henley

### People You Ought to Meet

*Bruce Chatwin*

by Nicholas Shakespeare

*Zelda*

by Nancy Milford

### Great Dogs in Fiction

*Mr. Bones*

*Timbuktu* by Paul Auster

*Lucky*

*Lucky in the Corner* by Carol Anshaw

### Armchair Travel

*A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush*

by Eric Newby

*Looking for Lovedu: A Woman's Journey through Africa*

by Ann Jones

### Humor

*The Evolution Man, or, How I Ate My Father*

by Roy Lewis

*The Bear Went over the Mountain*

by William Kotzwinkle

### Women's Friendships

*Antonia Saw the Oryx First*

by Maria Thomas

*The Book Borrower*

by Alice Mattison

# 2007 MLA Conference Helena, Montana Red Lion Colonial Hotel April 25-28, 2007

## Workshops and Activities



**Basics of  
Endowment Development**  
William B. Pratt/Pratt & Associates  
April 25, 9:00—12:00 pm



**Returning Joy to the Library**  
Dr. Mary C. Bushing  
April 25, 1:30—5:00 pm



**Bringing Boys & Books  
Together: Practical Activities  
that Engage Boys in Literacy**  
Barbara Swanson Sanders  
April 25, 8:30—11:45 am  
April 25, 1:00—3:15 pm



**Reference and Beyond: All You  
Want to Know About Reference  
But Never Asked**

Christy Donaldson, Jan Zauha, and  
Connie Strittmatter, Reference  
Librarians, Montana State Univer-  
sity

April 25, 9:00—12:00 pm  
April 25, 1:30 pm—5:00 pm



## Library Trivia Answers

(from page 1)

1. ANSWER: There are more public libraries than McDonald's.
2. ANSWER: Only 40% of the public. Where do the other 60% get their information?
3. ANSWER: Americans spend nine times as much on home video games (1.5 billion) as they do on school library materials for their children.

April 26, 2007

7:00 – 8:00 am	Yoga New Members/First-time Attendees Breakfast (others welcome)
8:00 – 10:00 am	Montana's Changing Economy: What Montana Librarians Should Know
8:30 – 10:00 am	What's New in K-12 Literature Using Your Data to Capture Your Attention Beyond Books and the Goo Goo Gahs Finding Free Legal Information on the Web Leadership and Advocacy in Rural Libraries: Ideas and Perspectives from ACRL Montana High School Initiative
10:30 – 12:00 noon	Keynote Speaker and General Session The Pleasures and Perils of a Life of Reading
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Exhibitor's Luncheon
1:00 – 2:30 pm	Reader's Advisory with Nancy Pearl
3:00 – 4:30 pm	General Trends in Technical Services Cha Cha Chooey Chee CHANTS No David!: A Positive Approach to Behavior Issues OCLC/MSL Content Cooperative Pilot Project Update Program Opportunities with the Montana Committee for the Humanities ikaitapiitsinikit: Tell Old Stories
3:00 – 5:00 pm	Marketing Your Library Using the What's Your Story? Campaign Genealogy Online
5:00 – 6:00 pm	Interest Group Meetings 5:00 pm Dine Around Helena – Open to all conference attendees.
6:00 pm	ASLD Dinner
5:00 – 8:00 pm	Reception at the Montana Historical Society
8:00 – 10:00 pm	Sheila Cates Scholarship Fundraising Event—Trivia Mania III!

April 27, 2007

7:00 – 8:00 am	Yoga Division/Interest Group Breakfasts Trustees Interest Group ASLD PLD SLMD
8:30 – 10:00 am	Community Outreach and Communication Electronic Presence and Outreach: Beyond Your Library's Website The Good, Bad and the Ugly: A Critical Analysis of Select American Indian literature Get a Clue! and YNK: Planning Your 2007 Summer Reading Program Radical Militant Librarians Tell All: Intellectual Freedom Q & A OCLC Western Update Significant Tidings
10:30 – 12:00 pm	Creativity at Work Curriculum, Standards, Assessment and Collaborative Collection Development How Do I Face My Neighbors With Smut in my Library? The Z39.71 Holdings Display Standard: A Basic Overview and General Principles Books and Babies: Serving Infants and Families It's Like Making Sausage: The Montana Legislative Process Podcasting 101 Web Searching for All
12:30 – 1:45 pm	Awards Luncheon
2:00 – 3:30 pm	What Librarians Say They Do, But Really Don't Professional and Staff Development in School Libraries Every Library a Depository: Answering Common Government Documents Questions at Any Library Managing Libraries in the Digital Age Flickr for Libraries Carpooling on the Information Highway
2:00 – 4:00 pm	Winning Support for Your Library Poster Sessions
4:00 – 5:30 pm	Membership Meeting
5:30 – 6:30 pm	Interest Group Meetings Children's/YA American Indian Montana ILL Happenings
6:00 – 7:30 pm	The Growlers
6:30 – 7:30 pm	State Library Commission Reception
7:30 – 10:00 pm	MLA Membership Dinner
7:30 – 8:30 pm	"Special Session" - Irish traditional acoustical music
8:30 – 9:00 pm	Tiernan Irish Dancers

April 28, 2007

7:30 am	Yoga
8:30 – 10:00 am	Preparing Newspaper Collections for Digitization Rousing Reads: Favorite Picks from the 2006 Montana Book Award Committee Comics and Graphic Novels: Heroes for the Library & Classroom Building a New Public Library in Bozeman – Never Again! Montana Shared Catalog Update Ethical Leadership Managing and Protecting the Library Network: Vista Version
10:30 – 12:00 pm	Intellectual Freedom & Comics
12:30 – 2:00 pm	Author's Luncheon - Neil Gaiman
2:30 pm	Neil Gaiman Public Appearance



# Montana's Natural Heritage Available Online

By Sue Crispin

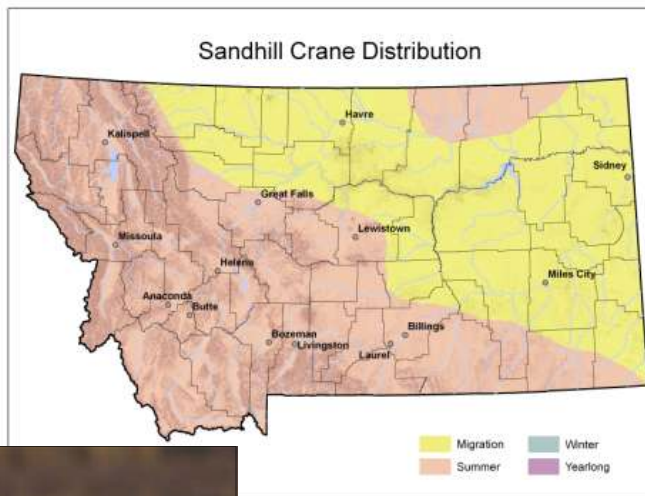
Montana Natural Heritage Program Director

The job of the Natural Heritage Program is to gather information from a broad range of sources about Montana's native species and habitats and make it available to everyone who needs it.

However, bringing all this information together in one place often highlights how much we *don't* know about Montana's remarkable natural heritage. Which bat species live in Montana, and where? What are all the different damselflies and dragonflies that inhabit Montana's streams, and what role do they play in our aquatic ecosystems? What is the diversity of sagebrush habitats in northeastern Montana, and which wildlife species do they support?

None of these questions can be fully answered with existing knowledge. So the biologists at the Natural Heritage Program go out into the field each summer to help gather information aimed at filling some of the most important "data gaps."

Each of these field studies results in a published report that helps unlock the secrets of Montana's rich natural diversity. For example, over the past year the Natural Heritage Program has produced reports on the grassland birds of north Valley County, aquatic species and ecosystems of the Middle Powder River watershed, and



*Migration, habitat, and food habits are just some of the types of information available online for the Sandhill Crane.*

the vegetation types of the Rocky Mountain Front and Centennial Valley. In addition, we publish annual reports on Montana's plant and animal species of concern.

The full text of all our publications can be found on the web. There are currently over 170 publications from the Natural Heritage Program, dating back to 1989, available on the State Library's Web site (<http://msl.mt.gov>) in electronic format (including color photos and maps). You can browse them by category (birds, mammals, aquatic, plants, etc.) by going to the Natural Heritage Program page and selecting "Publications." You can also search for a particular publication by date or keyword using the Montana Shared Catalog.

As part of our data collection role, the Natural Heritage Program also welcomes information from individuals. For example, birdwatchers can now report the birds they have observed (species, time, and place) through our Web site -- just log in to the Natural Heritage Information Portal and click "submit an observation." This tool will soon be expanded to accept observations for any animal species, so that "students of nature" from across the state can help us build a better understanding of Montana's very special natural heritage.

For more information on accessing NHP data or on the Natural Heritage program in general, contact Allan Cox at (406) 444-3989

**Montana Natural Heritage Program**

SEARCH:  GO

HOME | ANIMALS | PLANTS | ECOLOGY | PUBLICATIONS | DATA | ABOUT

**WANTED: Bird Observations.** Enter your observations through our new, state-of-the-art *NHPortal*. Read about the NHP.

**Natural Heritage Program in the News**

New Land Cover Information for the Centennial Valley & the Rocky Mountain Front

**Recent Publications**

Crosswalking National Wetland Inventory attributes to hydrogeomorphic functions and vegetation communities: a pilot study in the Gallatin Valley

2006 Montana Plant Species of Concern

2006 Montana Animal Species of Concern

**Montana Natural Heritage Program**

**NATURAL HERITAGE INFORMATION PORTAL**

SEARCH SPECIES OF CONCERN

VIEW ANIMAL GUIDE

VIEW PLANT GUIDE

VIEW COMMUNITIES GUIDE

AQUATIC INFORMATION

SUBMIT YOUR OBSERVATIONS

The Montana Natural Heritage Program is the state's source for information on the status and distribution of our native animals and plants, emphasizing species of concern and high quality habitats such as wetlands. We collect, validate, and distribute information, and assist natural resource managers and others in applying it effectively. Established by the Montana State Legislature in 1983, the program is located in the Montana State Library, where it is part of the Natural Resource Information System.

**NatureServe Explorer**

Search NatureServe's award-winning database of 50,000 species & ecosystems of the U.S. & Canada

Visit the Montana Bird Distribution Database

Montana Stewardship Data & Maps

**Montana State Library** 1515 East Sixth Ave., Helena, MT 59620-1800 • 406-444-5354 • fax 406-444-0581 • email: [mnhp@mt.gov](mailto:mnhp@mt.gov)

**University of Montana** The Natural Heritage Program is operated by the Office of the Vice-president for Research and Development at the University of Montana. [Read more...](http://mnhp.mt.gov)

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# Wake Up, Shake Up and Celebrate: National Library Week is Coming!



March is here and that means National Library week is just around the corner. National Library Week is a time to remind

the nation of the value and importance of the local library and each of you has the opportunity to shake up your communities by sharing in the excitement of an event that has been going on for almost 50 years.

National Library Week was started in the mid-50's in response to fears that people were spending less time with their books and more with TVs, radios, and musical instruments. (A few things really haven't changed.) In 1954, the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers formed the nonprofit National Book Committee. When the committee first started, one of its mottos was "developing strong and happy family life." By 1958, members had refocused and organized the first National Library Week with the theme "Wake Up and Read!"

During the 1960's, the American Library Association took on responsibility for National Library Week and continues to provide ideas, public relations materials, awards programs, and advertising campaigns.

Montanans have also made their contribution to this historic event. The Montana Library Association has been recognized numerous times in the notable Grolier Award competition as having one of the best National Library Week programs, and in 1967, Mrs. Leo Graybill of Montana became the first woman to ever chair the National Library Week committee.

Today National Library Week has two main goals: 1) to promote li-

brary use and support and 2) to celebrate our nation's libraries, librarians, and staff.

Promoting your library can be fun and exciting no matter which aspect you focus on. Will it be your expansive collections, great services, or creative technology? Will you hold a special program, implement a new one, or just get people involved?

## A Few Ideas to Get You Started

### Storyland/Literary Museum

Have patrons bring in junk and other unusable items and transform them into a museum. An old apron can become the one worn by Old Mother Hubbard. Dad's dried up paint brush can become the one used by Tom Sawyer on Aunt Polly's fence.

### Guess the Number of Library Books

This is really fun and each person begins to appreciate all the books when they learn exactly how many there are!

### Favorite Book (or other media)

Vote on a favorite item in the library and then honor that book (CD, DVD, audio tape, etc.) with a special ceremony.

### Make a Book Into a Movie

Choose the cast for a movie based on a short story or novel! (Grades 9-Advanced)

### Aim for World's Record With Giant Pop-Up Book

What's 8 feet tall, 14 feet wide, weighs more than 300 pounds, and can be found at an elementary school in Shakopee, Minnesota? It's not the world's scariest principal; what it is (according to art teacher Jane Smith), is potentially the world's biggest pop-up book.

### Teens for Libraries

Help teens create and film public service announcements about their local library to air at local schools or on the community public access channel during National Library Week. Organize a vote for the best announce-

ment, and give a prize to the winner.

### Get a Clue at the Library

Host a contest requiring the use of library resources, such as a scavenger hunt or trivia game. Give prizes for the winners that are donated from local businesses.

### Extreme Library Makeover

Solicit feedback from advisory groups about how the look of the library can be improved. Decide on a few manageable projects. Then during National Library Week, invite patrons to spruce up the library. Sample projects: create tables or seating from discarded books (large, bound reference ones are best); give a fresh coat of paint to the walls or furniture; create a mural on a library wall; sew new pillows, seat cushions and/or curtains; create new signs to make finding library resources easier; plant a garden in front of the library. Ask local hardware and building supply stores to donate materials in exchange for publicity associated with the extreme library makeover effort.

*Governor Schweitzer has lent his support and will be featured on Montana's National Library Week poster.*



Download this poster for your use at  
<http://msl.mt.gov/WhatsYourStory/Tools/posters.htm>

## PR Corner: National Library Week 2007—Sample Op-Ed

*This op-ed can be customized and used during National Library Week and throughout the year. More sample materials for National Library Week 2007 can be found on the "What's Your Story?" Web site at <http://msl.mt.gov/whatsyourstory>.*

### Building Community: Traditional or Virtual, Libraries Thrive in All Dimensions

By [name, title of library spokesperson]

Word Count: [fill in final number of words]

Are books passé? Have library stacks been outpaced by memory sticks? Are large echo-laden library halls just for get-togethers?

Some would say our libraries are obsolete, a quaint vestige of our past. But that's not only a facile assessment. It's simply untrue.

April 15-21 is National Library Week, a time when libraries of all types and the people who use them come together to celebrate the contributions of all libraries, librarians, and library workers in our nation's schools, campuses, and communities.

Libraries today are enjoying a golden age in which public, school, college, and university libraries are flourishing not only within the physical confines of bricks and mortar, steel and glass, but also in the continuously expanding Internet universe.

The facts speak for themselves: library use is up nationwide. More than 2 billion items were checked out last year, and librarians serve nearly 1.8 billion visitors annually. At our library...[Insert information about your library: stats, unique programming, etc.]

Rather than threatening our libraries, the age of technology has only complemented our services and expanded our reach. This is because libraries are about more than information and data sharing.

Libraries are about community.

They provide us with a physical gathering place, a crossroads for people of all ages, ethnicities and economic means, complete with trained information professionals - librarians - fostering inquiry and assisting with interpretation of information both onsite and online.

Libraries also are leading the way in forging creative public-private charitable partnerships with a new generation of supporters like the Bill & Melinda Gates Library Foundation, this year celebrating 10 years of major financial support for computer equipment, software, and training at our nation's libraries.

These efforts aren't simply charitable. Education and literacy are essential to staying competitive in a global society. Recent studies indicate we've got some serious distance to travel.

More than eight million American children, grades 4-12, struggle to read, write, and comprehend on the most basic levels, according to federal studies, and only three out of 10 eighth-graders are reading at or above grade level, according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

Society as a whole pays, according to the National Governors Association, whose "Reading to Achieve" report indicates that deficits in basic literacy skills drain as much as \$16 million annually from businesses, universities, and under-educated workers themselves in lost productivity and other costs.

Libraries are part of the solution. Research in 14 states has found that students with well-developed school libraries consistently score 10-18 percent higher on reading and other tests. College and university librarians help students conduct research, either in person or online through "ask a librarian" services. In fact, they answer almost 73 million reference questions each year – about twice the attendance at college football games.

For many, a large number of whom don't have computers at home, our public libraries make the difference between decent wages and economic disenfranchisement.

Libraries and librarians are more relevant than ever, providing a 24/7 information delivery service. Our multi-faceted, multicultural, multilingual resources are providing a bridge to their best conceivable future for millions nationwide. And, of course, admission is free.

It's democracy in action. There's nothing obsolete about that.



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Darlene Staffeldt, State Librarian  
Kris Schmitz, Central Services

Montana State Library Commission  
Donald Allen, Chair      Nora Smith  
Caroline Bitz      Cindy Carrywater  
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Sara Groves, Editor

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. 990 copies of this newsletter were published at an estimated cost of \$389.80, \$221.95 for printing and \$167.85 for distribution.

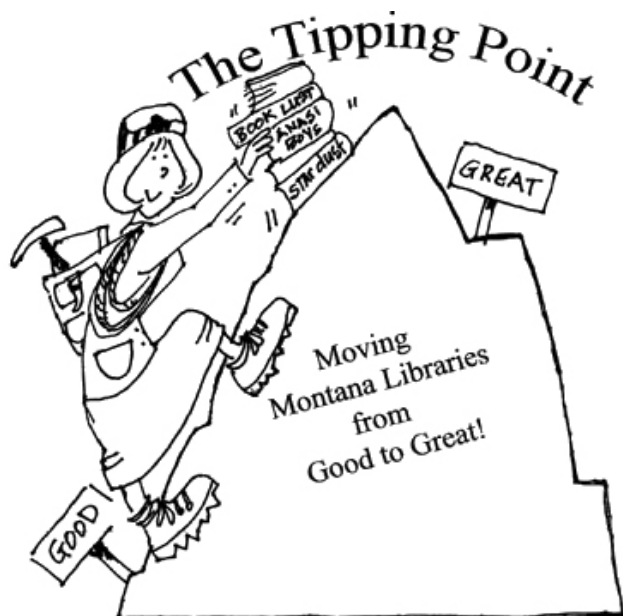
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## We'll See You at MLA in Helena!



Montana Library Association  
April 25-28, 2007

Looking for something to do other than spring cleaning this April? Then look no more. Attend this year's MLA Conference "The Tipping Point: Moving Montana Libraries from Good to Great."

Join us in Helena, April 25-28<sup>th</sup> for a conference packed with great workshops, fabulous speakers, and terrific events. We promise that you won't be disappointed.

And don't forget about the Pre-conference workshops! From exciting tours of historic Helena, to learning about building endowments, to workplace civility, to the intricacies of reference service, the pre-conference workshops promise to be packed with information as well as fun. Come to MLA early and plan on having a fantastic time while submerging yourself in a plethora of informative workshops and panel discussions.

The highlight of this year's conference will be special guests Neil Gaiman and Nancy Pearl. Get your registrations in early as seating for these two fabulous presenters is limited.

For more information and a complete conference schedule, log onto <http://www.mtlib.org/conf/mla2007/index.htm>.

*"Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read." Groucho Marx*